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## FOR USE IN YOUR LOCAL PAPER

### THE NEED FOR SONG.

The positive effects of song and singing have been demonstrated anew during the war, though there was really no need for that demonstration except for English-speaking peoples. Men have sung at their work ever since they started to work, and found their tasks made lighter by the rhythm that is in them; song had given them courage and has held them steadfast. Only the English speaking people are songless. With their conventional contempt for any display of emotion, and their peculiar religious heritage that attached a quality of sinfulness to the state of mind that found its expression in song, it was inevitable that the Anglo-Saxon would be held to the better employed when he was considering infant damnation than when he raised his voice in song. As for the man who whistled on the Sabbath, well, the Lord have mercy on him.

The war, with its choruses and singing leaders, removed the last vestige of the theory that there was spiritual merit or physical advantage in mute woe, and it would be a moral catastrophe if we were to forget this lesson so easily learned and so pleasantly put to practice. Demobilization will bring back many men who have become skilled in mass singing, and advantage should at once be taken of their presence to add something to the sum total of our available joyousness.

One who has had the good fortune to come in the dusk on a crowd of Italian track laborers gathered about the drab shanties and box cars, yet singing with an exultation and an artistry possible only to those who have developed a talent for happiness, can readily appreciate how much we are missing by stifling the natural human tendency to sing. These laborers, after the dull toil of the day, are able to lift themselves above their surroundings, their weariness and discomforts and make themselves happy, to forget the past, to discount the future and ignore the present of a degree beyond the powers of most austere philosophy.

The sing-song of the trenches, to which even the Britishers succumbed, is of recognized military value, and the chorus leaders have been valuable aids to military training in our own cantonments. We do not possess as yet the ability to break spontaneously into the song that is characteristic of the Latin races; we have to go about it as a matter of organization and skilled leadership, possibly because we are still new at it. But in any event we now have the leadership and the executive ability at our disposal, if we see fit seriously to make use of it. If the soldiers needed songs to make them forget their troubles in the trenches, our need will be hardly less to make us forget the worries and discomforts that must come in the long, hard campaign of reconstruction.

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### WHEN HER HUSBAND COMES HOME FROM WORK

*She understands the mood he is in from the music he plays.—*

*A perfect understanding thereby established.*

This is not a recipe culled out of a book entitled "A Thousand Ways to Please a Husband." It was told just in the nature of a little confession by a woman whose home life is known to be the nearest to the ideal. Apart from the fact of that state of happiness being an almost unknown quantity, the point of interest lies in her assertion that it is all due to the power of music or as she called it the "family Buddha,—our player piano."

Her husband constantly uses the player piano. When he comes home after a day's work, his first movement is toward the instrument. It is there that he unconsciously and unknowingly expresses himself and his reactions of the success or failure of the day. He puts into his playing his moods, his thoughts, his state of mind,—in short, himself. And she, understanding the power of expression that lies in music knows without his saying a word what his feelings are, and governs her actions accordingly. When he plays "Traumerei" for instance, she knows it has been a day of hard work and that he wants peace of mind; when he plays the Marche Slav by Tchaikowsky, she knows that things are in a tangle and that he wants freedom from it all; when it is some wild and rollicking gypsy dance, it means happiness and success and life. He speaks to her through the player piano and gives himself to her in a way that he could never hope to by mere talking, and she, understanding answers him in a manner that will most help to bring happiness to him in the state of mind which he at the moment finds himself. And therein lies the secret of it all,—understanding,—which in their case comes through the medium of music. The result is self-expression on the part of one individual with a depth and intimacy he could never express, and appreciation of that self-expression on the part of the woman through a knowledge of what the touch on the keys mean. Both are essential,—the power to express and the power to understand what is expressed. But to quote the words of that happy young mortal, "We could never have reached that measure of happiness which we have, had we not possessed "the family Buddha—our player piano."